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Book Review

Janet Eterovich

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Recommended Citation

Janet Eterovich, Book Review, 9 Clev.-Marshall L. Rev. 194 (1960)

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the trained eye of the Marxist evangelist is it truly visible. . . . Without the ministry of dedicated Marxian pietists, the wretched workers would have remained lost to this sublime revelation, and forever benighted in their unbelief (p. 46).

* * *

*Reviewed by Janet Eterovich**

LOTTERIES, LAWS AND MORALS, by Judge Francis Emmett Williams. Published by Vantage Press, Inc., New York, N. Y., 338 pp. (1958).

Have you filled in the last line of a jingle contest, bought a raffle ticket on a new car, or been a participant on a television "giveaway" show? I have. If you have too, the author of this book would put you and me into a special class. He would call us "suckers." After reading his book, I think he is right.

Judge Williams, the author, is a retired Circuit Judge of the Eighth Judicial Circuit of Missouri. He has written this book in order to introduce not only attorneys, the American Bar Association, Congress and the courts, to the law of the lottery, but to inform laymen as well.

Most of us do not know what a lottery is because our history and legal texts do not mention it. The author defines it for us and traces its history right up to the present time. He reveals how the modern lotteries have been operated.

Most, if not all the states' constitutions prohibit lotteries. The reason is obvious. Gambling is not an instinct born into us. It is learned behavior. Experience has taught that it drags society down. The desire to gamble becomes a passion—an uncontrollable yearning for something for nothing. For example, the Welfare Commissioner of New York complained bitterly when 55 families from all over the country came to the city in order to participate in the television program, "Strike it Rich," and remained in the city, on relief.

Furthermore, many states permit race-track gambling, which is a lottery. The Post Office Department looks the other way when promoters flood the mails with lotteries, and the Department of Justice has been lax in enforcing the anti-lottery statutes. Even a recent Supreme Court case decided in favor of

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a "giveaway" show which was a lottery in fact but not a lottery in law. And then there is Nevada.

One evil effect of this trend towards more and more "over-world" gambling is indicated on page 272 by the author:

When you buy a cake of soap, a can of soup, or a package of breakfast food, a part of the price probably goes to a jackpot jockey, a betting master, a 25-word sentence handicapper, or other professional prize awarders . . .

All is not lost, however. The writer presents some suggestions on how to alleviate the problem. He also presents a very well prepared appendix in which he explains the difference between a prize contest and a bona fide contest. He cites actual state and federal cases which decided for or against lotteries, and the rules for determining when a lottery exists.

I recommend this book highly. The case it puts forward is cogent, brief and well written. At times the author becomes repetitious, but this is apparently an effort to bring his main points home. You may or may not agree with it, but the book will assuredly stimulate your thought on the place of the lottery in our world today.

In view of the current national publicity being given to the TV Quiz Programs, a student of the law, an attorney or any enlightened American will want to read this book in order to understand the legal aspects involved.